

Pleasures of ENGLISH POETRY

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Misra, G.S.

Pleasures of English
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JANGAMAWADIMATH, VARANASI

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Prescribed for High School Classes in U. P.

Pleasures of English Poetry

By

Shri G. S. Misra, M. A.,
VICE PRINCIPAL,
K. K. Vocational College,
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PREFACE

The aim of poetry is to teach, to move and to delight. The compiler has endeavoured his best to keep that sovereign function of poetry in view. The book contains a large variety of poems—devotional, patriotic, historical, descriptive and reflective. Each poem is prefaced with its central idea which will, I am sure, enable the students to study the poems intelligently.

Editor.

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Messrs. William Heinemann Ltd.
for *In the Bazaars of Hyderabad* by
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for *Truly Great* by W.H. Davies.

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THE CHILDREN'S SONG

The poet makes a pledge to maintain and uphold the dignity and honour of his Motherland, and he prays to God to endow him with all the virtues necessary for such a devotion. He further entreats Him to grant him the strength to love all men beneath the sun.

Land of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be;
When we are grown and take our place,
As men and women with our race.

Father in Heaven, who lovest all,
O, help Thy children when they call;
That they may build from age to age,
An undefiled heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth;
That, in our time, Thy grace may give,
The Truth whereby the Nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves always,
Controlled and cleanly night and day;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Teach us to look, in all our ends,
 On Thee for judge, and not our friends;
 That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed
 By fear or favour of the crowd.

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
 By deed or thought, to hurt the weak;
 That, under Thee, we may possess
 Man's strength to comfort man's distress.

Teach us Delight in simple things,
 And Mirth that has no bitter springs,
 Forgiveness free of evil done,
 And love to all men' neath the sun.

Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
 For whose dear sake our fathers died;
 O Motherland, we pledge to thee
 Head, heart, and hand through the
 years to be.

—*Rudyard Kipling.*

NOTES

UNDEFILED HERITAGE : pure and glorious inheritance.

YOKE : responsibility and duty.

THE TRUTH : high and noble ideals.

RULE : discipline.

MAIMED : crippled : here the word means 'unworthy'.

BITTER SPRINGS : ill-feeling towards others.

QUESTIONS

1. What promise does the poet make to his Land of Birth ?
2. What does he invoke the Almighty for ?
3. Explain clearly the idea contained in the line—
"And love to all men 'neath the sun".

THE BRAVE ELEPHANT

A real incident beautifully described. Man even today, has to learn about obedience, loyalty and heroism from animals. The elephant was Bahadur in the true sense of the word.

Long, long ago, on India's plains,
There raged a battle fierce and strong;
The din of musketry was heard,
And cannon's roar was loud and long.
Old Hero marched with stately tread
His part to act in the affray:
And on his back above all heads,
The royal ensign waved that day.

Fondly the soldiers viewed their flag,
Which shook its colour to the air,
Proudly the driver rode; and sent
His watchful gaze now here, now there,
Till 'Halt !' he cried; and Hero heard,
And instantly the word obeyed,
When, lo ! a flash, a shriek, and then
His driver with the slain was laid.

Oh, fierce and hot the conflict grew:

Yet patiently old Hero stood

Amidst it all, the while his feet
 Were stained, alas ! with human blood.
 His ears were strained to catch the voice
 Which only could his steps command.
 Nor would he turn when men grew weak,
 And panic spread on either hand.

But yet the standard waved aloft;
 The fleeing soldiers saw it. 'Lo !
 We are not conquered yet,' they cried,
 And rallying, closed upon the foe.
 Then turned the tide of conquest, and
 The royal ensign waved at last
 Victorious o'er the blood-stained field,
 Just as the weary day was past.

Yet waited Hero for the word
 Of him whose sole command he knew—
 Waited, nor moved one ponderous foot,
 To his own captain's true.
 Three lonely nights, three lonely days,
 Poor Hero halted. Bribe nor threat
 Could stir him from the spot. And on
 His back he bore the standard yet.

Then thought the soldiers of a child
 Who lived one hundred miles away.

"The driver's son; fetch him !" they cried:

"His voice the creature will obey."

He came, the little orphaned lad,

Scarce nine years old. But Hero knew

That many a time the master's son

Had been the "little driver" too.

Obediently the brave old head

Was bowed before the child, and then,

With one long wistful glance around,

Old Hero's march began again.

Onward he went, the trappings hung

All stained and tattered at his side,

And no one saw the cruel wound

On which the blood was scarcely dried.

But when at last the tents were reached,

The suffering Hero raised his head,

And trumpeting his mortal pain,

Looked for the master who was dead;

And then about his master's son

His trunk old Hero feebly wound,

And ere another day had passed

A soldier's honoured grave had found.

—*Mary D. Brine.*

NOTES

The incident occurred in the war between the Rajputs and the Mughals. Bahadur was the elephant's name. Even after the death of his driver he stood firm with the royal banner fluttering overhead. The elephant not only saved the Mughal army from complete rout but ultimately led them to victory.

MUSKETRY : gun-fire.

ENSIGN : banner.

EARS WERE STRAINED : exerted to the utmost.

CLOSED UPON THE FOE : surrounded and grappled with the enemy.

WISTFUL : sad.

TRAPPINGS : ornamental pieces of cloth hanging on either side of the elephant.

MORTAL PAIN : pain caused by the fatal wound.

A SOLDIER'S.....FOUND : died a glorious death like a brave soldier.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the story in your own words.
2. What did the elephant do after the death of the driver ?
3. What was the effect of the elephant's brave stand upon the retreating army ?
4. When and how did the elephant leave the battle-field ?
5. Study Felicia Hemans' CASABIANCA.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE GLOW-WORM

What a noble idea expressed in the form of a story !
The lesson that brother should not war with brother
taught about 150 years ago holds good even today, and
shall hold good forever.

Nightingale, that had all day long
Had cheer'd the village with his song,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite !
When looking eagerly around,
He spied far off, upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by the spark;
So, stooping from the hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.
The worm, aware of his intent,
Addressed him thus, right eloquent—
“Did you admire my lamp,” quoth he,
“As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song ;
For 'twas the self-same pow'r divine
Taught you to sing, and me to shine;

That you with music, I with light,
 Might beautify and cheer the night."
 The songster heard his short oration,
 And warbling out his approbation,
 Releas'd him, as my story tells,
 And found a supper somewhere else.
 Hence jarring sectaries may learn
 Their real interest to discern ;
 That brother should not war with brother,
 And worry and devour each other ;
 But sing and shine by sweet consent,
 Till life's poor transient night is spent :
 Respecting in each other's case
 The gifts of nature and of grace.
 Those Christians best deserve the name
 Who studiously make peace their aim,
 Peace both the duty and the prize
 Of him that creeps and him that flies.

—*William Cowper.*

NOTES

CROP : the craw of a bird, a pouch in a bird's gullet.

MINSTRELSY : art of music: here the word means the song.

SECTARIES : People who constantly quarrel among themselves because they belong to different sects or religions.

QUESTIONS

1. Imagine yourself to be the nightingale and describe the incident in your own words.
2. What lesson do you draw from the poem ?
3. How did the glow-worm save its life ?

RAIN IN SUMMER

The poet conveys to us very vividly the relief and pleasure that a shower of rain brings to 'a hot, dried-up and dusty country-side in summer.'

How beautiful is the rain !
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain !

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramps of hoofs !
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout !
Across the window-pane
It pours and pours ;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain !
The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each pool;

His fevered brain
 Grows calm again,
 And he breathes a blessing on the rain.
 From the neighbouring school
 Come the boys,
 With more than their wonted noise
 And commotion;
 And down the wet streets
 Sail their mimic fleets,
 Till the treacherous pool
 Engulfs them in its whirling
 And turbulent ocean.
 In the country, on every side,
 Where far and wide,
 Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
 Stretches the plain,
 To the dry grass and the drier grain
 How welcome is the rain !
 In the furrowed land
 The toilsome and patient oxen stand ;
 Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
 With their dilated nostrils spread
 They silently inhale
 The clover-scented gale,
 And the vapours that arise
 From the well-watered and smoking soil.

For this rest in the furrow after toil
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain.
He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

—*H. W. Longfellow*

NOTES

FIERY : hot, burning.

CLATTERS : the sound of rain falling on the roofs; this sound is compared to the clatter of the hoofs of galloping horses.

SPOUT : a pipe through which the rain water falls from the roof.

TWISTED : flowing in a zig-zag course.

BREATHES A BLESSING : blesses the rain in a whisper.

MIMIC FLEETS : paper boats.

TURBULENT OCEAN : refers to the noisy and swiftly running streams.

QUESTIONS

1. Mention the different kinds of pleasure that a shower of rain gives to (1) a sick person; (2) school boys; (3) the exhausted oxen; (4) the farmer.

2. Describe in your own words the pictures the poet has drawn in the poem.

3. In the light of the above poem describe your own experiences after the first shower in summer.

IN THE BAZAAR OF HYDERABAD

In this short and beautiful poem we picture to our minds
the familiar sights and sounds of an Indian bazaar.

What do you sell, O ye merchants ?
Richly your wares are displayed.
Turbans of crimson and silver,
Tunics of purple brocade,
Mirrors with panels of amber—
daggers with handles of iade.

What do you weigh, O ye vendors ?
Saffron and lentil and rice.
What do you grind, O ye maidens ?
Sandalwood, henna and spice.
What do you call, O ye pedlars
Chessmen and ivory dice.

What do you make, O ye goldsmiths ?
Wristlet and anklet and ring,
Bells for the feet of blue pigeons,
Frail as a dragon-fly's wing,
Girdles of gold for the dancers,
Scabbards of gold for the king.

What do you cry, O ye fruitmen ?

Citron, pomegranate and plum.

What do you play, O musicians ?

Cithar, sarangi, and drum.

What do you chant, O magicians ?

Spells for the aeons to come.

What do you weave, O ye flower-girls

With tassels of azure and red ?

Crowns for the brow of a bridegroom,

Chaplets to garland his bed,

Sheets of white blossoms new-gathered

To perfume the sleep of the dead.

—Sarojini Naidu.

NOTES

JADE : a dark-green ornamental stone.

LENTIL : pulse.

DRAGON-FLY : an insect with a long body and brilliant colours.

SPELLS : charms.

AEONS : ages.

TASSELS : a pendent ornament, consisting generally of a roundish mould covered with twisted threads of silk, wool, etc., and having threads hanging down in a fringe: *Jhalar*.

CHAPLETS : garlands, wreaths.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the various sights and scenes of the Bazaars of Hyderabad.
2. Give a description of the bazaar in an Indian village.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

God blesses those who love their fellow-men.

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold :
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou ?'—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love
the Lord'.

'And is mine one ?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men'.
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God
had blest,
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

—*Leigh Hunt*

NOTES.

HIS TRIBE : people of his tribe.

RICH : brilliant.

LIKE A LILY IN BLOOM : pure and white like the
lily flower.

PRESENCE : angel.

VISION : same as presence.

ALL OF SWEET ACCORD : full of kindness.

WAKENING : so dazzling as to rouse Abou from
sleep.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in brief the substance of the poem.
2. What was the angel doing in Abou's room ?
3. Why did God love Abou most ?
4. What moral lesson do you draw from the poem ?

TRULY GREAT

The poet very beautifully gives us his idea of a happy and contented life and describes in simple words the proud rich possessions of a truly great man.

My walls outside must have some flowers,
My walls within must have some books;
A house that's small; a garden large,
And in it leafy nooks.

A little gold that's sure each week;
That comes not from my living kind,
But from a dead man in his grave,
Who cannot change his mind.

A lovely wife, and gentle too ;
Contented that no eyes but mine
Can see her many charms, nor voice
To call her beauty fine :

Where she would in that stone cage live,
A self-made prisoner with me ;
While many a wild bird sang around,
On gate, on bush, on tree.

And she sometimes to answer them,
 In her far sweeter voice than all ;
 Till birds, that loved to look on leaves,
 Will doat on a stone wall.

With this small house, this garden large,
 This little gold, this lovely mate,
 With health in body, peace at heart—
 Show me a man more great.

—*W. H. Davies*

Notes

LEAFY NOOKS : shady and secluded retreats.

SELF-MADE : voluntary, of her own accord.

DOAT : (*literally*) to show excessive love or fondness for, the idea is that the birds will be so charmed by the sweet voice of the poet's wife that they will keep on gazing at the stone wall of the house.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe in your own words the possessions of a truly great man.
2. Study Thomas Campion's **THE MAN OF LIFE UPRIGHT**, and Henry Wotton's **THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE**.

TRUE GROWTH

"Good gear goes in small bulk." Mere size or age is no test of perfect life. True growth or development is a matter of perfection of quality.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be ;

Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere :

A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,

Although it fall and die that night ;
It was the plant and flower of Light.

In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

—*Ben Jonson*

NOTES

BULK : bigness, size.

STANDING : lasting.

BALD : bare.

SERE : withered, dead.

FLOWER OF LIGHT : flower of true beauty.

SHORT MEASURES : short periods. The idea is that just as little things—lasting for a day only—are full of beauty, so a short life also may be perfect.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in your own words the substance of the poem.
2. Suggest another title for the poem.
3. Expand the idea contained in the last two lines of the poem.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

The poem brings out clearly the duty of a soldier : he is not to reason why, but to do and die. True to the traditions of unflinching loyalty and obedience the six hundred soldiers obeyed the order which they knew was wrong. And into the valley of death rode the six hundred !

I

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !' he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II

'Forward, the Light Brigade !'
Was there a man dismayed ?
Not though the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die,
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell,
 Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flashed all their sabres bare,
 Flashed as they turned in air,
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while
 All the world wondered :
 Plunged in the battery smoke,
 Right through the line they broke ;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reeled from the sabre stroke
 Shattered and sundered :
 Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade ?
O, the wild charge they made !
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
The noble six hundred !

—*Alfred Tennyson*

NOTES

The incident so beautifully described in this poem refers to the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War (1854). The Light Brigade of the British cavalry charged against the Russian battery due to a misunderstood order. The result was disastrous—only about 200 soldiers returned alive.

LEAGUE : three miles.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH : the place where the enemy's guns were and where most of the soldiers met their death.

BLUNDERED : committed a serious mistake.

VOLLEYED : volley means the discharge of cannon shots in quick succession ; *volleyed* thus means discharged in a volley.

LINES 18-20 : Note the effect of the repetition of the line
STORMED AT : fired upon.

SABRES : heavy one-edged swords, slightly curved towards the point, used by cavalry.

COSSACK : one of a people in south-eastern Russia, forming splendid light cavalry.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the incident in your own words.
2. What is the supreme duty of a soldier ?

PATRIOTISM

How effective and soul-stirring the opening question is !
The poem inspires us with profound love for our mother-
land and creates in us a feeling of disgust for one

“Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land !”

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
‘This is my own, my native land !’
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burned
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand ?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;
For him no minstrel raptures swell ;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim ;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

NOTES

SO DEAD : so devoid of the feeling of love for his motherland.

STRAND : means shore, or beach of the sea; here the word means country.

NO MINSTREL RAPTURES SWELL : no poet sings joyous songs in his praise.

AS WISH CAN CLAIM : as he may desire.

PELF : wealth, riches.

WRETCH : worthless and miserable creature.

CONCENTRED ALL IN SELF : thinking of his own interest only, utterly selfish.

LIVING : as long as he lives.

DOUBLY : both physically and spiritually.

VILE : base, worthless.

TO THE VILE DUST . . SPRUNG : 'Dust thou art, to dust returnest !'

QUESTIONS

1. Explain briefly the idea of the poem.
2. Why does 'the wretch' die 'unwept, unhonoured and unsung' ?
3. Suggest another title for the poem.

THE POOR MAN'S RICHES

The poor man's riches, joys and pleasures are far more noble, dignified and lasting than those of a rich man.

Poor ! did you call me ?
My wants are but few,
And generous nature
Gives more than my due ;
The air and the sunshine,
Fresh water and health,
And heart to enjoy them,
All these are my wealth.
No close-handed miser,
That e'er had a hoard,
Could reckon such a treasure
As I can afford :
The wood in its verdure,
The stream in its flow,
Are mine in their beauty
Wherever I go.
Though gold has its friendships
That cling to it well,
Acquaintance and lovers
Too many to tell ;

Yet I, too, by myriads,
Have friends of my own,
Who pay me sweet visits
When I am alone.

All saints and apostles,
All prophets divine,
All sages and poets,
Are teachers of mine,
My friends and my teachers,
Wherever I roam,
The guides of my spirit,
The lights of my home.

—C. Mackay.

NOTES

GENEROUS : bountiful.

CLOSE-HANDED : niggardly.

GOLD : a wealthy person.

BY MYRIADS : in thousands.

APOSTLES : those sent to preach the gospel: specially the twelve disciples of Christ.

PROPHETS DIVINE : those inspired by God to warn and teach.

THE GUIDES OF MY SPIRIT : those who keep me on the right and virtuous path.

THE LIGHTS OF MY HOME : those who guide me in my domestic matters.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe, in the light of the above poem, the riches of a poor man.
2. In what ways are the riches of a poor man purer, vaster and truer than those of a wealthy man?
3. Study Charles Mackay's poem : **THE MILLER, OF THE DEE.**

THE POET'S SONG

What a benevolent influence the poet wields not only on man but also on lower animals ! They are simply entranced by his sweet music.

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He passed by the town and out of the street,
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.
The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,
The snake slipped under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, "I have sung many
songs,

But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

—A. Tennyson.

NOTES

WAVES OF SHADOW : the shadows of the wheat plants bowing down by the force of the wind moved like waves.

In HER CLOUD : in the sky where she was flying.

SPRAY : a small shoot of a tree.

DOWN : feather.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in brief the substance of the poem.
2. Why did the birds suspend their activities ?
3. Why is the song of the poet more lively and cheerful than that of the nightingale ?

TO-DAY

Time and Tide do not wait for anybody ; a day once
lost is lost for ever. You cannot recall it at any cost.
So utilise the present moment to the full and get all you
can out of it.

So here hath been dawning
Another blue day :
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away ?

Out of Eternity
This new day is born ;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did ;
So soon it forever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day :
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.

—*T. Carlyle.*

NOTES

BLUE : bright and clear.

OUT OF ETERNITY : The idea is that nobody knows
either the source or the destination of the day.

AFORETIME : in former or past times.

QUESTIONS

1. Give in your own words the substance of the poem.
2. What lesson do you learn from the above poem ?

DAFFODILS

The poet very vividly and faithfully describes his impressions of a large number of daffodils. The poem illustrates how deeply Wordsworth was moved by the objects of nature.

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company !

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had
brought ;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

—*William Wordsworth*

NOTES

I WANDERED . . AS A CLOUD : The poet wandered alone : hence the comparison with a solitary patch of cloud floating in the sky.

MILKY WAY : the galaxy or the luminous band of stars stretching across the heavens.

TEN THOUSAND : Here the number is indefinite : refer to the words "a crowd, a host", in lines 3 and 4.

TOSSING . . DANCE : The daffodils, as they sway in the wind, seem to be "dancing in the breeze".

WEALTH : refer to the last stanza.

VACANT : free from all cares.

PENSIVE : thoughtful.

THEY FLASH . . SOLITUDE : A beautiful sight or scene is a permanent source of joy to the poet. It can never be forgotten. You may not see the sight again and yet you may recapture the joy it gave you when you first saw it.

QUESTIONS

1. Give briefly in your own words a description of the daffodils.
2. What pleasure did the sight give to the poet ?
3. Expand the idea contained in the last stanza.

THE SLUGGARD

To sit with folded hands and do nothing is a criminal
waste of the gifts God has given us.

'Tis the voice of the sluggard ; I heard him
complain,

'You have wak'd me too soon, I must
slumber again',

As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
Turns his sides and his shoulders and
his heavy head.

'A little more sleep, and a little more slumber.'
Thus he wastes half his days and his hours
without number;
And when he gets up, he sits folding his hands
Or walks about sauntering, or trifling he
stands.

I pass'd by his garden, and saw the wild briar,
The thorn and the thistle grow broader
and higher;
The clothes that hang on him are turning
to rags

And his money still wastes, till he starves
or he begs.

I made him a visit, still hoping to find
He had took better care for improving
his mind,
He told me his dreams, talk'd of eating
and drinking,
But he scarce reads his Bible, and never
loves thinking.
Said I then to my heart, 'Here's a lesson
for me;
That man's but a picture of what I might be;
But thanks to my friends for their care
in my breeding,
Who taught me betimes to love working
and reading.'
—Unknown Writer

NOTES

AS THE DOOR... ON HIS BED : He turns on his bed
as the door turns on its hinges.
HEAVY : drowsy.
SAUNTERING : Wandering about idly.
GROW BROADER AND HIGHER : Being neglected grow
wildly.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the daily routine of the sluggard.
2. What lesson did the Poet learn from the sluggard ?
3. Suggest an alternative title for the poem.

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राष्ट्रगीत

जन गण-मन-महिनायक जय हे, भारत भाग्य विधाता ।
पंजाब सिंध गुजराट, मराठा, द्राविड उत्कल बंग ॥
विध्य हिमाचल यमुना गंगा, उच्छल जलधि-तरंग ।
तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशिस मांगे, गाहे तव जय गाथा ॥
जन गण मंगलदायक जय हे, भारत भाग्य विधाता ।
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय, जय, जय, जय हे ॥
